

The 27th Annual Jericho High School Alumni Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

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APRIL 6, 2017



Time marches on, and with it comes change. After years of holding the pre-ceremony dinner at the Maine Maid Inn and then at the Milleridge Inn, this year's dinner took place up the road a bit at Westbury Manor. Management kindly let us change the name of the place for the evening with a few cans of spray paint, which we thought was mighty swell of them, don't you think?

Well, they didn't "let" us, exactly, 'cos we forgot to ask. And we certainly would have scrubbed away the graffiti ourselves, but when we drove past the catering hall a few days later on our way to somewhere else, it seems they had done the job for us. Like we said, extremely accomodating. Come inside and join us!



The first honoree to arrive was Dr. Bill Passarelli III, shown here with Hall of Fame founder Mr. Bob Hoffman. Bill, who graduated in 1983, is a cardiologist in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.



Pat Liptak (r.) has videotaped all twenty-seven induction ceremonies, going back to the first in 1991. Here she takes on a different role, assisting Bill Passarelli's father with his collar, as inductee Craig Pinto (JHS '96) arrives.

Phil Bildner, from the class of '86, came with his husband, Kevin Lewin (right). Phil is something of a Renaissance man: attorney, prolific authors of children's books, and public speaker.



Craig poses with Hall of Fame committee member Nick Maraventano, who'd spent many years teaching in Jericho. Nick also emceed many of the ceremonies, succeeding teacher Barbara Murphy.



We had a whole passel of Passarellis on hand for the dinner and ceremony: from right to left, Bill's father, Robert; daughter Catherine; Bill; wife Pamela; daughter Grace; sister Rosanne, who came up from Delaware; Bill mom, Connie; and Roseanne's fiancé, Robert Montagnese.



Inductee Paula Finkelstein Rosenthal ('84) and her husband, Howard, live in Jericho, where their three children graduated from JHS.

(Right): No one ever truly retires from Jericho. Pat Liptak and Mary Vitale both retired in 2016, but they're still indispensable in organizing and orchestrating the Hall of Fame evening. Mary is a member of the committee that votes on the candidates nominated by you every fall.



Time for the obligatory atmospheric shot. Is it just us, or does this photo of the helmeted chafers (the round metal buffet food warmers—just learned this very instant that's what they're called) look like it could be a picture of a row of women's hair dryers at Jericho's J'Art beauty salon circa 1965?



Nick Maraventano (c.) is joined by fellow Hall of Fame committee member Brian Cummings (l.) and math teacher Matthew DeMarinis (r.), who for the second year in a row was moonlighting as the induction ceremony co-emcee. Brian, a former math teacher, and currently curriculum associate, science and technology education, was undoubtedly this year's MVP, taking on multiple duties to make the event a success.



Six degree of separation, Jericho Division: You know how we say that no matter how hard you might try, you just can't avoid running into people from Jericho, because they're, like, everywhere? Well, here's proof. The polite and capable young server seen here with Brian Cummings is a 2012 grad of Jericho High School, and just recently graduated from college.



Co-emcee Matthew DeMarinis and Jericho Board of Education member Gina Levy.

So glad that inductee Robert Simon ('72), here with Mr. Bob Hoffman, was able to make it to the dinner on time. Frankly, we were worried because Bob, a prolific TV producer, was scheduled to wrap up this season of his show Quantico the same day as the Hall of Fame dinner and induction. But thanks to a delay in shooting caused by a March snowstorm, the final shoot was moved back to the following day. Bob had spent the last nine months in New York producing the show and was really looking forward to going home to Los Angeles.



One of the nicest aspects of the Hall of Fame evening is that it often reunites students with their favorite teachers. Bill Passarelli was thrilled to see his former music teacher Ken Pollitt, who is now the curriculum associate, performing and fine arts, as his parents look on.



When you're the photographer, you never get your photo taken. Thanks to Pat Liptak for taking this photo of Hall of Fame committee member Philip Bashe, for evidence that he was there.



Brian Cummins asked to have his picture taken with Mr. Bob Hoffman. Happy to oblige.



(Left) Pssst! Hey! Hey! Cool it, man, the principal's here! Joan Baiman Rosenberg is indeed the principal of Jericho High School, which makes her not only a former alumnus (class of 1971) but also a member of the JHS Hall of Fame and the mom of Jericho grads. That's got to be some sort of world record.



Craig Pinto, shown above with JHS teacher Mary Benson and below with Brian Cummings, is currently the youngest member of the Alumni Hall of Fame. His class, 1996, just became eligible this year. You see, unlike the Baseball Hall of Fame, which requires that players be retired for a measly five years before they are considered for Cooperstown, in order to qualify for the Jericho Hall of Fame, you need to have graduated twenty or more years ago. So under our stringent standards, Babe Ruth, Willie Mays, Ty Cobb, Goose Gossage—not a single one of them—would even get near the JHS Hall of Fame. Ha!



At the induction ceremony, each honoree is introduced by a Jericho High School senior. Above, that's Bob Simon with David Steinberger from the class of '17, and, below, presenters Sabrina Milana and Samantha Lustberg with Mary Vitale. As is usually the case, Bob and David really hit it off.





Just a few words from Mr. Bob Hoffman (right) and Principal Joan Baiman Rosenberg (above), and then it's time to cut the cake.

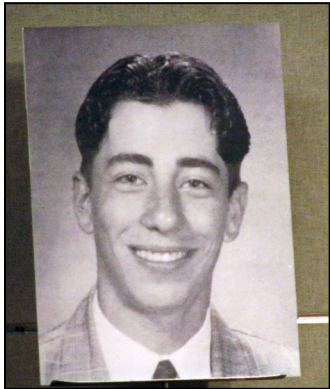
Below, the twenty-seventh lineup of alumni to enter the Jericho High School Hall of Fame: Dr. Bill Passarelli ('83), Paula Finkelstein Rosenthal ('84), Robert Simon ('72), Phil Bildner ('86), and Craig Pinto ('96).

Below and inset, the cake, before it was savagely set upon by the newest members of the Hall of Fame, who tore it apart with their bare hands, leaving not even a crumb for anyone else. Hey, when you're in the Jericho High School Hall Fame, nobody says a word to you. The honor brings with it extraordinary power and influence, but we're confident they'll go on to use it for good and not evil.

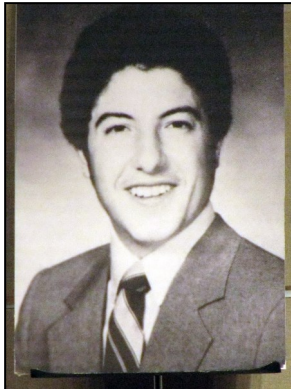
Sure would have liked some of that cake, though ...



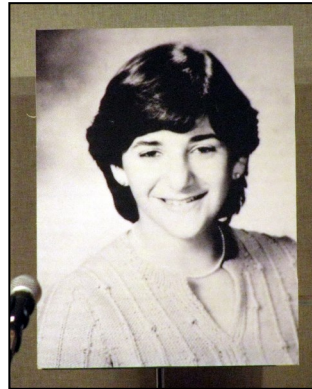
Welcome to the auditorium of the Jericho Public Library. Sure, being in the JHS Alumni Hall of Fame confers the equivalent of a Get Out of Jail Free card in Monopoly. But to get that card, first you have to sit for two hours under a two-by-three-foot blow-up of your high school yearbook photo. It's almost a test of will. Will any of the inductees crack from the realization that their yearbook pic will be visible to an entire auditorium full of people? Actually, they all hold up rather well.



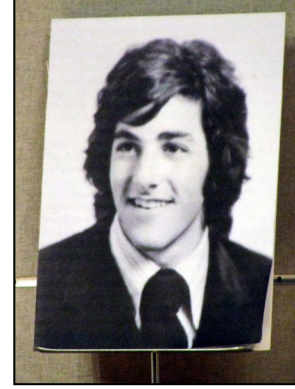
Craig Pinto



Bill Passarelli



Paula Finkelstein Rosenthal



Robert Simon



Phil Bildner



(Right) Okay, it's show time! Teacher Meredith Hynes emcees for the third year in a row; she and Matthew DeMarinis have paired up for the last two ceremonies. They have that classic Burns-and-Allen straight-man / funny woman dynamic going, only hip.

(Below) If you've never attended a JHS induction ceremony, you really should. This is no solemn occasion full of speeches that begin "As I look out upon this sea of shining faces, I am reminded of the words of ..." Zzz ... It is a poignant but frequently hilarious evening, and everybody gets into the spirit of the night.

Introductory remarks came from Mr. Henry Grishman, the longtime Jericho school superintendent; Principal Joan Baiman Rosenberg; and Barbara Krieger, president of the School Board.



Each alumnus is presented by a JHS senior, who get to pick the honoree whose story resonates most for them. It could be because they're planning on entering a similar field, or not.

Grace Hu, from the class of 2017, chose to introduce Dr. Bill Passarelli, recounting his story and explaining what she finds so fascinating—and inspiring—about the cardiologist, who graduated from Jericho in 1983.





"Nobody is more excited that I am accepting this honor," said a very excited Dr. Bill Passarelli, who grew up in West Birchwood. After graduating from high school, he attended Cornell University and then New York Medical College. A cardiologist, Bill specialized in treating heart failure. In 2005 Bill and his family watched their home on the Gulf of Mississippi get washed away by Hurricane Katrina. The Passarellis lost literally everything they owned. As he recounted, his neighborhood was destroyed, and some of his neighbors did not survive.

Bill sent his wife and daughters to live temporarily with relatives in Florida while he worked seventy-two hours straight to save lives, despite the absence of electricity and resources. He wouldn't see his family again for two months.

Another reason for Bill's induction into the Jericho High School Alumni Hall of Fame: he remains a devoted New York Jets fan, flying up for home games. If that doesn't demonstrate perseverance and fortitude in the face of tragedy, we don't know what does.



Paula Finkelstein Rosenthal ('84) was introduced by senior Samantha Lustberg. Paula, an attorney, entrepreneur, and an advocate for people with hearing loss, is deaf, as is her husband, Howard, and one of their three children, Julie.

Paula was diagnosed with hearing loss at the age of three, and her hearing grew progressively worse. Obviously, this did not prevent Paula from achieving a great deal. She and her family communicate orally.

Among her many accomplishments, Paula founded a website called HearingExchange, which serves as an online community of people with hearing loss, their parents, and professionals. She's also written many articles on the subject.

Like Bill Passarelli, circumstances took Paula away from her family for a time. Because her daughter was diagnosed late, about seven years ago Paula and Julie moved to St. Louis so that Julie could attend the Moog Center for Deaf Education, where she learned to speak. Then they returned to Jericho, which Paula praised for having provided "outstanding support" to Julie, now twenty-one.

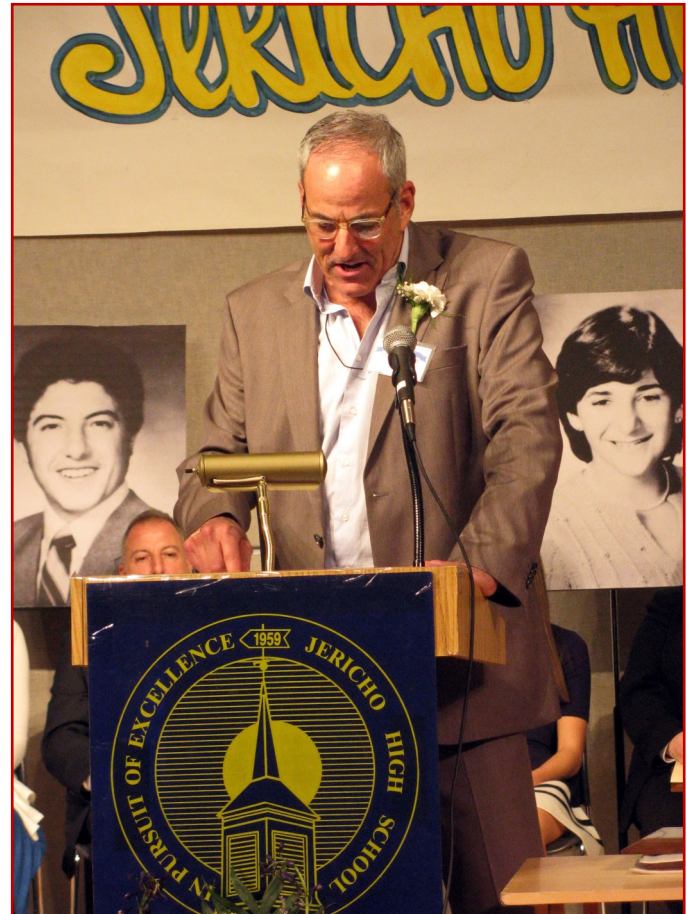
Finally, in 2011 Paula also started Just a Bite Desserts, a dessert styling and consulting business headquartered on North Broadway in Jericho.



Every year, the Jericho Retirees' Association (JRA), made up of retired faculty, makes a generous donation on behalf of a charitable organization founded by a member of the Alumni Hall of Fame. Here Carol Spielberger presents a check for \$1,000 to the Resource Center, an antibullying center in Texas, where 2015 honoree Steve Noviello is a popular TV personality. The award, the Emil Voigt Community Service Award, is named in honor of the late Emil Voigt, one of the best social studies teachers ever to stand in front of a classroom.



The class of 1972's Robert Simon, introduced by senior David Steinberger (above), has worked in Hollywood for forty years, coproducing and producing such quality TV shows as the current hit *Quantico*, as well as *Twin Peaks*, *CSI: New York*, *The Agency*, and many others. (He also produced the pilot for the 2006 series titled—wait for it—*Jericho*, about a Midwestern town in the aftermath of a nuclear apocalypse.) Bob gave a very funny acceptance speech, but he also impressed upon the students in the audience the importance of always learning and adapting to change, which no doubt helps to explain his longevity in a very fickle industry.



Next to be inducted: Phil Bildner ('86), who was introduced by senior Nathaniel Lee. From Jericho, Phil went to Johns Hopkins University and then earned a law degree from New York University. But he soon discovered that he wanted to teach and work with children, so he returned to school for a master's degree in early childhood and elementary education. He spent the next eleven years teaching in the Bronx and Manhattan. In 2006 Phil left teaching to become a

full-time writer. He has written dozens of picture books and young-adult novels, many of them with a sports theme, such as *The Shot Heard Round the World*, *Derek Jeter Presents Night at the Stadium*, and *Martina and Chrissie: The Greatest Rivalry in the History of Sports*.



Phil also speaks frequently at schools, which he enjoys because he says it allows him to be a teacher again. In fact, earlier in 2017, he spoke at both the *Cantiaque Elementary School* and the *Robert Seaman Elementary School*.



Phil spoke movingly as well as humorously about the challenges of growing up as a gay teenager. He thanked his parents, a number of teachers and friends, and also his husband, Kevin. "Wow," he reflected. "Thanking my husband. In public. That's something I couldn't have ever imagined doing thirty years ago."

The evening's final inductee, Craig Pinto ('96), was introduced by senior Sabrina Milana. His friend Harlan Friedman, who'd nominated Craig, wrote, "There has not been a moment when Craig doesn't go out of his way for others." A football and hockey player at Hofstra University, Craig saw his hopes of becoming a professional athlete derailed by celiac disease. But he put his considerable energy into starting a nonprofit organization, the National Celiac Disease Society, to raise awareness and education. To that end, he set two Guinness world records to raise money for charity: kicking the most field goals in twelve hours and twenty-four hours. (From 2008 to 2010, Craig was the team captain and kicker for the New Jersey Revolution Arena Football team.) In addition, he was assistant head coach of the JHS varsity football program for three seasons. He is currently the major-gifts officer for the nonprofit A Better Chance, which is headquartered in Manhattan, where he lives. In a very touching moment, he thanked his parents, both first-generation immigrants from Portugal, and talked about how proud he was that the plaque with his family name on it will be there for all to see in the Jericho High School hallway opposite the west-side entrance.



As always, teachers come out for these events. At far left is Mr. Harry Posnanski, with at very far left, facing the camera, Mrs. Dolores Hoffman. And at left, Ms. Maureen Tracy with Mr. Bob Hoffman.

Put it in the books. The twenty-seventh annual Jericho High School Alumni Hall of Fame is history.

Kids in the Hall: Inductees, 1991–2017

The Brief Descriptions Below Convey Only Part of What Makes These Alumni Hall of Famers, but You'll See How Eclectic Jericho Grads Are: Doctors, Lawyers, Firemen, Photographers, Dancers, Teachers, Musicians, Authors, Businessmen, Builders—Even an Opera Star

1st Induction Ceremony, 1991

Larry Grobel (1964), author
Arthur Kaminsky (1964), attorney
Maureen Byrnes O'Reilly (1969), psychiatric nurse
Rose-Ann Schifano (1965), corporate secretary/treasurer
David Starobin (1969), acclaimed guitarist, record producer
Pamela Joan Tropper (1968), doctor of perinatology, obstetrics and gynecology

2nd Induction Ceremony, 1992

Paul Altesman (1970), UN delegate
Wendy Chin Parise (1971), special education instructor
Dr. Ellen Cooper (1965), assistant professor at Boston University and virologist for AIDS
George Gilson (1967), business/concrete slip forming company and author
Martin A. Lee (1971), political activist, journalist, and author
Marc Miller (1965), attorney, author

3rd Induction Ceremony, 1993

Barbara Block Goldstein (1966), social worker and public education coordinator
Mitchell Goldman (1968), attorney and founder of drug education program
Ronald Irving (1969), professor and director of graduate studies, University of Washington
James Mansberger (1964), fire commissioner, Jericho Fire Department
Susan Sternberg Raff (1964), vice president/regional director, Macy's East

4th Induction Ceremony, 1994

Sharon Becker Markovics (1968), physician and leader in the field of pediatrics and adult allergies
Lorraine Huzar (1968), teacher and community activist
John Innelli (1973), attorney specializing in securities fraud and antitrust violations, political leader
Stuart Shalat (1968), researcher in occupational and environmental science
Michael Soupios (1967), college professor and administrator, author, lecturer
Jay D. Tarnow (1965), child psychiatrist, medical school professor

5th Induction Ceremony, 1995

Diane Freedman (1973), college professor and author
Steven Gittelman (1967), president of Vanderbilt Museum and entrepreneur
Roberta Grobel Intrater (1962), photo journalist
Randi Kramer Fox (posthumously) (1971), geneticist and founder of National Marfan's Syndrome Foundation
Peter Miller (1968), Emmy Award-winning sound engineer and editor
Steven Shimberg (1971), lawyer and environmentalist
Sanford Sylvan (1972), opera singer

6th Induction Ceremony, 1996

Philip Bashe (1972), author
Carol Fein Ross (1968), chief attorney, Warner Books
Robert A. Kaplan (1963), pediatrician
Robert Raiber (1964), dentist
Jonathan Santlofer (1963), artist
Gary Strudler (1973), early childhood educator
Ilise Zimmerman (1972), executive director, Northern New Jersey Maternal/Child Health Consortium

7th Induction Ceremony, 1997

Joan Baiman Rosenberg (1971), educator
Elizabeth Bernstein, (1970), attorney, educator
Robert F. Fischer (1965), psychiatrist
William Herskowitz (1964), educator
Steven Molina (1971), musician

8th Induction Ceremony, 1998

James F. Davis (1963), financial analyst
Brad Spencer (1975), attorney
Robin Samuel Twerdahl (1967), educator
Bonnie Siber Weinstock (1971), labor relations attorney
Heather West Werthessen (1967), educator

9th Induction Ceremony, 1999

Bruce Browner (1964), professor of orthopedic surgery
Ira Goldman (1969), gastroenterologist
Edward Green (1969), musician, educator

Steven Hahn (1969), professor of history, author

Lesléa Newman (1973), author

10th Induction Ceremony, 2000

Mark Jay Friedman (posthumously) (1973), cardiologist
Michele Innelli Cox (1976), director of human resources
Neil Minikes (1969), pediatrician/allergist and immunologist
Geoffrey Touretz (1969), educator

11th Induction Ceremony, 2001

Debra Esernio (1974), pediatrician, child advocate
Elizabeth Nicolosi (1980), international entrepreneur
Sharon Press (1979), attorney
Leslie Shalat Katz (1967), award-winning educator

12th Induction Ceremony, 2002

Sharon Chalkin Feldstein (1973), TV fashion designer, fund-raiser for children's causes
Martha Flanagan Sammartano (1975), educator/volunteer
Alicia Romano Neri (1977), pediatric endocrinologist

13th Induction Ceremony, 2003

Jennifer Armstrong (1968), director-consumer bank programs for Citicorp
Joel Flatow (1982), senior vice president, Recording Industry Association of America
Edward Mardovich (posthumously) (1977), stockbroker/volunteer, Make a Wish Foundation
Paul Pellicoro (1974), dance instructor to the stars
Wendy Schack Forrest (1976), attorney/volunteer for Meals on Wheels

14th Induction Ceremony, 2004

Walter Bachman (1968), teacher/coach
Susan Winston Berland (1979), council-woman/community activist
Bruce Smoller (1975), chairman of pathology department
Lori Traikos (1974), international photo-journalist
Arlene Lori Wasserman Weiss (1976), toxicologist, environmentalist

15th Induction Ceremony, 2005

Ellen Friedland (1976), documentary film maker
Diane Krencik (1975), dentist/environmentalist
Howard Lutnick (1979), CEO, Cantor Fitzgerald
Michael Milner (1969), elite firefighter
Richard Zimmerman (1976), medical director, Mayo Clinic

16th Induction Ceremony, 2006

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Jon Carin (1982), recording artist, keyboardist with Pink Floyd, Roger waters, Bryan Ferry, others

Celia A. Felsher (1972), attorney/school board president

Bruce Friedman (1976), chiropractor
Geraldine Kalfus-Gurman (1964), dance and drama educator

Jill Seelig (1979), publisher of *O, The Oprah Magazine*

Matthew D. Lynch (posthumously) (1997), first lieutenant, US Marine Corps

17th Induction Ceremony, 2007

Fred A. Bernstein (1974), journalist, educator, attorney

Paula Flatow (1980), freelance musician and teacher

Leslie Prichep (1964), associate director of brain research labs at NYU Medical Center

Peter Saunders (1967), civil engineer, US Naval Captain

Jeffrey Weinstock (1978), international marketing executive, Carnival Cruise Lines

18th Induction Ceremony, 2008

Joann Ferrara (1974), founder of Dancing Dreams Ballet

Bonni Retzkin (1978), Olympic skating coach

Neil Schechter, MD (1965), pediatrician

Adrienne (Levine) Shelly (posthumously) (1984), actress/director/filmmaker

Ronnie Steinberg (1965), sociologist/women's studies

19th Induction Ceremony, 2009

Marvin Schwartz (1969), CEO of Jarro Building Industries

Jessica Pincus Gerschitz (1970), president/COO of Abilities Inc.

Robin Bergman (1973), fashion designer/entrepreneur/political activist

Daisy Khan (1975), executive director, American Society for Muslim Advancement

Adam Levy, MD (1986), pediatric oncologist

20th Induction Ceremony, 2010

Mark S. Zaid, Esq. (1985), managing partner, attorney, litigation, National Security

Lori Greene (1978), executive producer, BBCAmerica.com and vice president of New York Women in Cable Telecommunications

Sandra M. Gumerove, Esq. (1968), attorney and advocate for Families with Special Needs

Lainie Friedman Ross, MD, PhD (1978), pediatrician, medical ethicist, professor

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Jay S. Winuk (1976), president, Winuk Communications, Inc., cofounder and vice president of MyGoodDeed

21st Induction Ceremony, 2011

Neil Goldberg (1981), graphic artist

Larry Licht (1972), senior staff engineer, General Dynamics

Les Scheinfeld (1973), associate director of Habitat for Humanity

Gail Sider (1977), fourth-grade elementary teacher

Stephen Spencer (1971), attorney, labor and employment law

22nd Induction Ceremony, 2012

James Greco (1973), president, Long Island K-9 Service

Patricia Monk-Eichner (1980), guidance counselor

Peter Shulman (1964), CEO of Pediatric Associates

Richard Slater (1978), girls' basketball coach

Benita Zahn (1972), TV news anchor/health reporter

23rd Induction Ceremony, 2013

Douglas Baumoel (1974), family-business consultant

Cliff Forziat (1966), teacher, wrestling coach

Dr. Robert Martin (1964), pediatric dentist

Janet Penn (1972), founder and executive director, Interfaith Action (IFA) Youth LEAD

Judy Reisman (1967), founder, Guanacaste Animal Welfare Foundation, photographer

24th Induction Ceremony, 2014

George Haggerty (1977), member of New York Governor

Andrew Cuomo's transition team, real estate attorney

Edith Lutnick (1977), cofounder, executive director and president, the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund

Lori Meyers Peterzell (1978), developer of social-media strategy for A&E (*Storage Wars*, *Hoarders*, *Duck Dynasty*, others)

Cary Siegel, MD (1977), attending physician, assistant professor at Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Jonathan Small (1965), award-winning TV/concert/video producer and director

25th Induction Ceremony, 2015

Ken McLaughlin (1969), Emmy Award-nominated journalist, *San Jose Mercury News*

Louis Nicolosi (1984), FDNY firefighter, 9/11 first responder, three meritorious awards

Steve Noviello (1992), Emmy Award-winning TV investigative reporter

Bonnie Schneider (1987), meteorologist, Weather Channel personality, and author

Glenn Stoller (1982), ophthalmologist

26th Induction Ceremony, 2016

Teresa Murray D'Amato (1984), attending ER physician, North Shore Hospital

Dr. Robert Pappalardo (1982), scientist, NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Eric Shaw (1991), Emmy Award-winning television writer

Billy Jay Stein (1988), Grammy Award-winning musician and record producer

Michael Winston (1969), business executive, corporate whistle-blower

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